

## **Next up: Duxbury's trails and land divisions**

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SPECIAL TO THE CLIPPER

Now that the 1627 Plymouth Second Division ("The Shore Lots") has been "put to bed," I can start on my next writing project. I'm planning to write about the many roadways that crisscrossed Duxbury many years ago.

It is probably close to impossible to discover all the roadways. Many were simply easements for people to get from their own property to the waterfront or another road. Many of the major roads in the Pilgrim era are now our paved roads. If the path was the best way to get from one place to another in the 1600s, it probably still is today.

Duxbury's first major road was the "1627 Hi-Way" established at the time of the 1627 Plymouth Second Division. Some Plymouth (Plimoth?) settlers had already moved into Duxburrough which was sometimes referred to as "the other side" or "across the bay." The description of the road included the abutting owners, which helped in determining the locations of some of the settlers. The road started in Plymouth, ran up into Rocky Nook (Kingston), and crossed the mouth of the Jones River (by ferry), then connected to what are today Parks Street, Tremont to Chestnut into Standish to Captain Standish's palisade.

Other roads that we will look into are the "Boston Road," which picked up from the 1627 Hi-Way and ran to the Tree of Knowledge corner and up today's Route 53. We'll also explore Greene's Harbor Road, the 1637 "Hi-Way" which ran from Standish Street (near Hall's Corner) to Millbrook and then to someplace near Ford's store. The 1637 road is, to me, one of the more interesting roads because a good part of it is still in existence – never really paved over.

There are two other road networks that I'll investigate. One is a roadway along the westerly end of the Shore Lots on Washington Street to the first and second meeting houses. The other is from "Littletown" (near the Tremont Street end of Harrison Street) to connect with other roads toward the meeting houses.

Even though many of these roads were used in the 1600s, many were still in use into the 1900s. When automobiles were invented it was not a case of, all of a sudden, roads were paved – it took quite a while. The terminology regarding these ways, although varied – road, hi-way, trails – were substantially the same, wide enough for a wagon. Surveyors refer to them collectively as "cart paths" or "cart ways."

One part of my research may involve the route Phineas Pratt took from Weymouth to Plymouth to warn the Pilgrims of an Indian uprising. The warning provided Capt. Myles Standish time to quell the problem pre-emptively. The Mayflower Society has a written diary of Phineas' trip, but it is difficult to trace.

My high-school classmate, Bruce Burgess, is a descendant of Phineas Pratt and he's been working on this for a while.

After completing work on these roads, my plan is to write about the Duxbury Land Divisions. The Duxbury First Division (1710) was comprised of mostly 40 acre lots. In fact, in some cases, the lot might be described as "Moses Soule's 40-acre lot" with no mention of it being in the first division. The other Duxbury land division was described as "The Duxbury 2nd and Last, Division" (1713). It comprised mostly 35-acre lots. These divisions included land in Pembroke, which was part of Duxbury until about 1713.

I plan to work on the Second Division first. Now, why would I do that, you ask? Simply because, there is a plan and a book of deeds for the Second Division. Since there is no plan (that has been found) of the First division, the research involved requires placing the abutting owners from the Second Division.

It took me six years to finish the "Shore Lots." I'm hoping that this work will go a little quicker.



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